

## UK & Ireland database

### 'The truth behind the child abuse cover-ups'

**North Wales children's home abuse – The Jillings report  
By Eileen Fairweather (pictured below) Eileen Fairweather is an award-winning journalist whose investigations over 20 years have helped expose several paedophile rings**



**The report that first exposed child abuse in North Wales care homes has finally been published. But, says Eileen Fairweather, damning details have still been left out**



## **Bryn-Estyn children's home in Wrexham**

**Seventeen years ago, a nervous-sounding woman rang and asked me to publicise a top-secret report. She was not the whistleblower, she explained, but a go-between. She would not give me her name: "It's safer if you don't know."**

**That secret report revealed the extensive rape and savage beating of countless children in North Wales children's homes. It was titled "Child Abuse: An independent investigation commissioned by Clwyd County Council, period 1974-1995". Last week, John Jillings's report on the Clwyd scandal was finally published. But Flintshire county council – successor to Clwyd – has heavily censored it. I dug out the original and discovered, unsurprisingly, that the cover-up continues.**

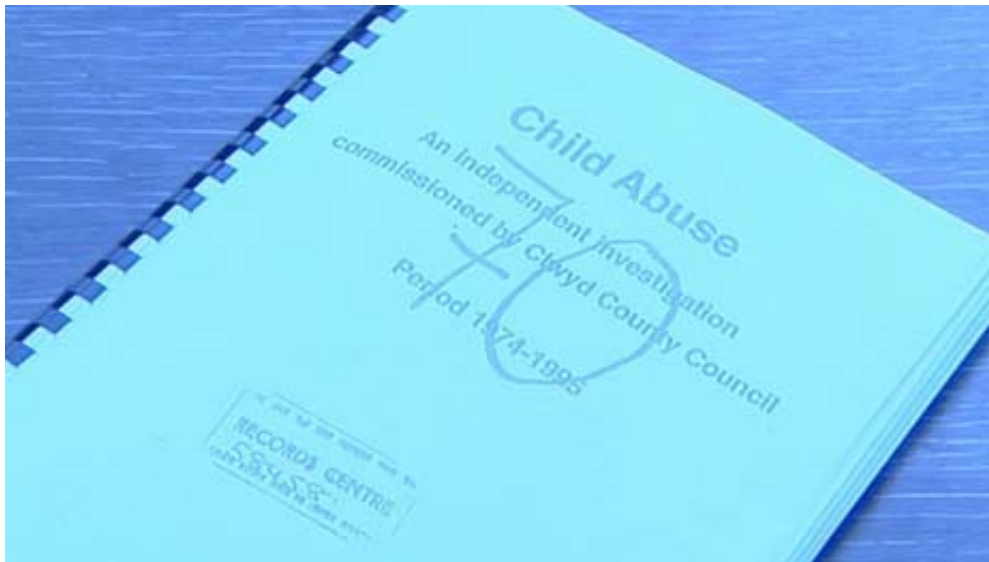


**Pictured above report author – John Jillings**

**The cloak-and-dagger way I obtained the redacted report speaks volumes about how those struggling to expose Britain's child abuse rings were intimidated and derided. Few then believed children's allegations that people in power, including politicians and senior police, were involved. I was myself incredulous when first asked in 1990 to investigate a social worker. Weren't care professionals all kind?**

**It was a baptism by fire, as one investigation rapidly led to another, and I realised that paedophiles had comprehensively infiltrated Britain's children's homes since the 1970s.**

**Back in 1996, only a handful of local politicians and officials were allowed a copy of Jillings's report. They were told – by police, insurers and the council – that they risked their careers, arrest and being personally sued if a word reached the media. The uncensored Jillings report includes these chilling threats.**



**Every report had a number, imprinted as a large watermark on every page. Any journalist who quoted it would supposedly be ordered by the courts to produce their copy or photocopy or face jail, and the watermark would expose their source.**

**My caller said apologetically I must write out the report by hand. I was also told to share it widely with other reporters. Journalists need exclusives, but the rationale was sound: “If all the media cover this, there won’t be a witch-hunt.”**

**I collected the report from a safe ‘drop’ point. It took me three exhausting days, holed up alone in a poky room in a B&B, to scribble out hundreds of pages. I fed to different newspapers and broadcasters different extracts suggested by my source. I only produced one article, and later a programme for HTV, under my name.**

**At least one paper and a news channel independently acquired the report: clearly, others whistle-blew. The coverage was widespread, and the whistleblowers’ drip-feed strategy worked: no one was arrested or sued.**



## Bryn Alyn

**Clamour mounted, and the Government announced a public inquiry. Yet surely, no further inquiries were needed: instead, police could have acted on the evidence already given to them by hundreds of victims and concerned staff, kicked-in doors and arrested suspected perpetrators.**

**The late judge, Sir Ronald Waterhouse, took evidence over three years, and in 2000 produced a report, “Lost in Care”. His tribunal had cost millions and ultimately achieved little, other than fat fees for lawyers. It amplified the horrors described by Jillings but it did not lead to arrests or managers being disciplined or struck off**

Return to an Address of the Honourable the  
House of Commons dated 15th February 2000 for the

## Report of the Tribunal of Inquiry into the abuse of children in care in the former county council areas of Gwynedd and Clwyd since 1974

# Lost in Care

**Jillings – the retired former director of Derbyshire social services – and his team, Prof Jane Tunstall and Gerrilyn Smith, had been commissioned after several former workers at Clwyd care homes were prosecuted in the early 1990s for abuse. But victims described many more abusers, and alleged organised child prostitution.**

**Last autumn Rod Richards – a former Welsh Conservatives leader, who has recently joined UKIP – revealed that the late Sir Peter Morrison MP, a close aide to Mrs Thatcher, was implicated in the North Wales care scandal. Did this limit the political will to act?**



Pictured above – Sir Peter Morrison

**Flintshire county council says it has redacted much of the Jillings Report on the advice of Operation Pallial, which in April confirmed it is examining 76 new allegations of abuse in 18 North Wales care homes between 1963 and 1992.**

**North Wales Chief Constable Mark Polin has warned abusers: “If you believe that the passage of time will reduce the resolve of Operation Pallial or any police force to identify people still alive who have caused harm to others and bring them to justice, you are sorely mistaken. Offenders should quite rightly have to look over their shoulders for the rest of their lives.”**

**Mrs Justice Macur is also examining the evidence excluded from the Waterhouse inquiry. Following a key arrest, I am cautiously hopeful that, this time, police mean business.**



**The authorities had issued such stern libel threats to Jillings's panel that it only named a few of the accused staff who were allowed to resign unpunished. But he exposed the excuses of the jobsworths who allowed sadists to control these terrible homes. This is the real censored dynamite in the report.**

**The whited-out paragraphs in the redacted version help minimise the breathtaking incompetence and laziness of "the suits" – those in the Welsh Office, the Social Services Inspectorate, the local council and welfare directors.**

**Some cuts are not even indicated. Jillings wrote that one Bryn Estyn boss – allowed to take early retirement following grave concerns – caned children "despite Welsh Office guidance to the contrary". In the redacted version, at section 8.6.4, the key words "Welsh Office" have vanished.**



**So many looked the other way, despite desperate children and a lone, brave social worker begging for years for action. Shamefully, the whistleblower Alison Taylor's name is also redacted from the online version of Jillings. This heroine was sacked. But those who looked the other way were promoted, moved to senior child welfare roles elsewhere or retired on enhanced benefits – like many alleged abusers.**

**Jillings, in the non-redacted report, reveals that one head of a home who allegedly cruelly beat boys even had a post secured for him by Clwyd at an exotic holiday destination abroad. Might some who failed to act now be investigated for neglect or conspiracy? When does inertia become criminal?**

**Many children ran away, but police returned them, weeping, to their abusers. At Bryn Estyn – famously described by Jillings as “the Colditz of residential care” – one boy was crammed into a laundry basket, the lid tied shut and tossed into a swimming pool. Other children saved him from drowning.**

**Jillings also describes “M”, a 15-year-old girl. Three men were eventually convicted of unlawful sex with her at her foster home. They tied her to a wooden pole, dragged her upstairs and half-drowned her in a cold bath. Yet managers claimed the sex was consensual. The uncensored version exposes concerns that she was prostituted. Such subtle redactions make it harder for people to join the dots.**

**In May 1997, after the Jillings report, a key member of Clwyd's fostering panel was imprisoned for abuse. Roger Saint had been appointed despite his known history of abuse.**

**Other redacted details concern Unit Five, where older boys routinely abused younger ones. It was feared that they violently “broke in” recruits for a paedophile ring. But managers said the sex was consensual.**

**The redacted version also conceals the fact that David John Gillison, imprisoned in 1987 for three years for gross indecency against a boy in care, was prominent in the local Campaign for Homosexual Equality. Why conceal that? Paedophiles in other child-care scandals have similarly hijacked the banner of gay rights – to the detriment of both children and ordinary, decent gay men. I earlier exposed a similar scandal at Islington children’s homes, where paedophile staff cynically accused anyone raising concerns of “homophobia”.**

**The redacted version has also removed the fact that a former Bryn Estyn head was arrested for abuse but the charge dropped. Yet Mat Arnold was long dead, so why was this cut? Jillings later – seemingly randomly – mentions that Arnold died of an unspecified blood disease. Later he notes his concern that the abusers put their victims at risk of sexually related diseases. Did he fear that Arnold died of Aids – and is that still too politically incorrect to mention?**

**I later exposed Mark Trotter, (pictured below) a Hackney social worker who died of Aids after abusing boys in care. His council believed him an Aids martyr and covered up his abuse.**



**The real martyrs are the care children who killed themselves or died violently. Jillings lists 12. He called them R1, R2, etc, with just a few poignant lines about their deaths by hanging or falling from heights. My hand ached after I wrote out that report, and so did my heart.**

**I later learnt of four other abused boys who died tragically or mysteriously. I rang the secretariat of the Waterhouse tribunal and asked if it would examine the deaths of these 16 boys. The official said no and, when I asked why not, became supercilious. If they're dead, he snapped, they can't give evidence – can they?**

**I slammed down the phone and wept.**

**Back in 1996, my sole news story about Jillings's report appeared in a Sunday paper. It had been severely cut. I understood why – I had focused on something key but “dry”, namely the insurers' role in suppressing the report. But I felt I had failed these hurt children and my distress infected a weekend with old friends.**

**Even they seemingly thought I was exaggerating the scale of the scandal. I glumly trailed round a stately home's garden with them and shut up. One, a psychoanalyst, wrote me a sweet, implicit apology after the Jimmy Savile revelations and said she and colleagues had since been**

**inundated with people painfully disclosing long-hidden abuse. She thanked me for helping make the unbelievable believable.**

**I have sometimes thought of those who escaped the Holocaust during the war, but no one believed their stories. This has been a hard journalistic beat to tread. Yet I am not one of the victims of Britain's holocaust of children, just a witness, a reporter. Dear God, please, this time, let us not fail them**

**The abusers**

**Much of the abuse took place at Bryn Estyn Children's Home in Wrexham, where paedophiles like Peter Howarth (pic below) – a former housemaster – sexually abused boys as young as 12. [CLICK THIS for more on Howarth](#)**



**'Scum of the earth' – Howarth was jailed in 1994 for 10 years. He died in prison. But for one of his victims, Andrew Teague, the repercussions of Howarth's attacks are relived almost every day. "They are the scum of the earth," he said. "They can paint it any way they like – psychiatrists, psychologists – they can say what they like about them, they are scum." Four staff at Bryn Estyn have been convicted of either sexual or physical abuse of children.**

**Paul Bicker Wilson, 49, residential care officer at Bryn Estyn. He was given a suspended sentence of three years and two months in 1994 at Knutsford Crown Court for assault and**

bullying.

Joined the Bryn Estyn staff as a temporary child care officer in 1974. Before that he worked as a Press photographer for six years and in linen and shoe factories in Northern Ireland for another five. He also worked at children's homes in Leicester and Southwark and was a lumberjack in Scotland. Stayed at Bryn Estyn until it closed in 1984 when he was employed at Chevet Hey care home.

TRIBUNAL: Heard complaints by 39 ex-residents of physical abuse spanning Wilson's 10 years at Bryn Estyn. Seven former members of staff also admitted he was a violent bully. In 1994 he pleaded guilty to three offences of assault causing ABH and one of common assault on a boy at Bryn Estyn

Stephen Norris, 63, (pic below) former residential care officer at the Bryn Estyn home. He was sentenced to a total of seven years jail in 1993 for sex offences against boys. Norris was released after serving half the sentence. Joined Bryn Estyn as a houseparent with his wife Margaret in 1974. Following his national service he spent 10 years as a labourer, coach driver and insurance clerk. The father-of-two's first job in the child care system was at a home in Greystone Heath. Became senior houseparent at Bryn Estyn in 1977 and stayed in charge until its closure when he transferred to Cartrefle Community Home in Broughton.



**TRIBUNAL:** Heard how Norris would befriend boys by offering them a sympathetic ear. He was obsessed with sexual matters and was present in the shower block when boys washed themselves. Norris was jailed for three and a half years in 1990 for five indecent assaults involving three boys. Further jailed in 1993 for seven years for serious sex offences on boys at Bryn Estyn. [Click this for more on Norris](#)

November 1999 – Home-owner child abuse conviction – A former supervisor at two children's homes in north Wales has been jailed for five years for indecently assaulting boys in his care in the 1970s. Richard Leake, 58, (pictured below) sexually assaulted boys in his care while working as a supervisor at Bersham Children's Home in Wrexham and later as principal at Ystrad Hall in Llangollen.



Joseph Dodd, 63, officer in charge at Ty'r Felin. He was investigated, but the Crown Prosecution Service decided not to take him to court. He later retired on grounds of ill-health. The report was satisfied he did use excessive force on the children in his care. He was never been convicted of any offences.

Cyril Samuels – Penarth – A care worker at a South Wales children's home has been jailed for seven years for 15 sex attacks. Cardiff Crown Court heard father-of-three Cyril

Samuels was arrested as part of the massive police investigation called Operation Goldfinch into abuse in children's home

Samuels was employed for five years at the Headlands National Children's Home in Penarth between 1969 and 1974. At least Six boys, aged between 10 and 15 were sexually abused. Samuels, of Penarth, was found guilty of a total of 15 charges – including four of indecent assault and 11 of serious sexual assaults.



Leslie E Wilson: sentenced to 15 months in prison for gross indecency and attempted Buggery in 1977. Joined Little Acton staff in 1974, became a senior housemaster two years later.

TRIBUNAL: Wilson pleaded guilty in 1977 to offences of indecent assault, gross indecency and attempted gross indecency. He was sentenced to 15 months behind bars and was dismissed from Clwyd County Council.

Michael Taylor: In September 1993 he had four cautions in relation to indecent assault. The Crown Prosecution Service decided not to pursue to court. Deputy officer in charge at Bersham Hall in Wrexham for less than a year between 1972 and 1973.

TRIBUNAL: Heard eight complaints from former residents. Three alleged sexual abuse and a Chevet Hey ex-resident alleged he was indecently assaulted in the summer of 1973. In

1980 Taylor was convicted of two indecent assaults on a teenager. Placed on two years' probation.

Derek Brushett – Bryn-y-don – Brushett (pic below) was convicted in November 1999 of a catalogue of sexual and physical abuse on 17 boys, aged between 11 and 16, at Bryn-y-don approved school, Dinas Powys, near Cardiff, between 1974 and 1980.



In 1997 – A BOLTON man says he feels “devastated and let down” after watching the sex beast he claims abused him as a child being sentenced to 12 years in jail. Noel Ryan, aged 66, admitted 14 charges of sex abuse on boys in his care at a residential special school in North Wales. At least 17 boys were bugged at Clwyd Hall School from 1970 to 1981 by a houseparent, Noel Ryan, was jailed in 1997 for 12 years.

**But the Bolton man who says he was abused after being referred to Clywd Hall in the 1970s where Ryan worked as a house parent said: “He was evil and should have got life.” Full conviction write-up here**





David Gillison: As with Jacqueline Thomas, he was convicted of sexual offences in 1986. He was a social worker not then employed in residential care. David Gillison (indecent assault of a 16-year old at Cheviot Hey)

On 14 March 1997, in the Crown Court at Mold, Robert Martin Williams, a former nursing auxilliary at Gwynfa Residential Unit, was convicted of two offences of rape of a girl patient, who was aged 16 years at the time of the offences and who is identified as P in paragraphs 20.12 and 20.13 of this report. Concurrent sentences of six years' imprisonment were imposed on him.

Kenneth Scott: Was care assistant at Tanllwyfan, near Old Colwyn from 1974 to 1976. Left school at 16 to work for the National Coal Board for two years before becoming a warden for the Youth Hostels Association. He was also a barman and a care assistant for Wandsworth Borough Council.

TRIBUNAL: Was jailed for eight years in 1986 after pleading guilty to two serious sexual assaults and three of gross indecency. The victims were boys aged between 14 and 16

**John Allen , 58,(pic below) founder of the Bryn Alyn community. He was jailed for six years in 1995 for indecent assaults on boys in his care over an 11-year-**

**period. See John Allen working at a Premier Inn (November 2012)**



Anthony Taylor: Member of the Bryn Alyn Community staff who is now retired.

TRIBUNAL: Complaints from three ex-residents who alleged they were sexually abused. He was convicted in 1976 by Talgarth magistrates of two indecent assaults and was fined pounds 40

April 1998: Robert Starr, of Rumney, Cardiff, became the first person to be convicted as a result of the inquiry. He was sentenced to 15 years in prison at Cardiff Crown Court after pleading guilty to indecently assaulting nine boys. His family later claimed he pleaded guilty because of the stress of the inquiry

HUW MEURIG JONES: Deputy officer in charge of Little Acton Assessment Centre, near Wrexham 1974-1980. Took up his post as deputy officer in charge at Little Acton Assessment Centre, Wrexham, in 1974. He resigned two years later. He was formerly a houseparent in Liverpool and

after his resignation became an unqualified social worker for Clwyd County Council. He resigned again in 1981 after successive police investigations of allegations of sexual abuse made against him.

TRIBUNAL: Three witnesses made complaints against Jones. One former boy resident alleged Jones had made sexual advances to him on two occasions and claimed he used to walk around blowing kisses and nipping backsides. Jones has never been convicted of offences.

JOHN ILTON: Teacher at Bryn Estyn. A weight lifter and body builder who was accused of slapping youngsters. Joined Bryn Estyn in 1972 and stayed until it closed in 1984 when he went to Bersham Hall for six years. A varied career in factory and office work before going to teach English at the home.

TRIBUNAL: There were 14 complaints made for alleged assault while he was at Bryn Estyn and three in his time at Bersham Hall.

Norman Roberts, 66, and son Ian Roberts , 42, were both convicted at Mold Crown Court in 1993 of horse-whipping a boy fostered by the family at the age of seven. Was a self-employed farm worker with a small-holding at Gwalchmai, Anglesey. He also ran a mobile grocery business but described himself as a quarryman at his trial. He and his wife Evelyn were approved as foster parents in 1978 being described as "most impressive" by a senior social worker.

TRIBUNAL: Was convicted of an assault occasioning actual bodily harm in 1993 after allegedly whipping his foster child. Acquitted of cruelty to the same child. Given a two year conditional discharge.

IAN MALCOLM ROBERTS: Son of Norman Roberts (above).

TRIBUNAL: Also given a two year conditional discharge for a common assault on the same foster child.

Malcolm Scrugham: described by Sir Ronald Waterhouse as being among the “most serious offenders”. A foster parent. Sexually assaulted young girls in his care. Jailed for ten years in 1993 for raping a girl of 11 and indecent assault on a boy. 2012 – Now living in nr Great Yarmouth

Scrungham and his wife Maria moved from Old Colwyn to Bala in Gwynedd in 1982 and fostered a nine-year-old girl. Occupation unknown.

TRIBUNAL: In 1993 he was convicted of two rapes and one indecent assault on the girl. Also convicted of aiding and abetting a boyfriend of the girl to have unlawful sexual intercourse with her. He got 10 years.

Carl Johnson Evans: Succeeded Huw Meurig Evans as officer in charge of Little Acton Assessment Centre in 1976.

Previously he was a trainee forester, salesman, Army musician and assistant manager in a finance company.

TRIBUNAL: He was suspended from Little Acton in 1978 following an allegation of rape made by a girl resident. The tribunal heard allegations from staff he had given children alcohol and allegedly spent too much time “counselling” girls. He has never been convicted of any charges.

Brian Ely – Bryn-y-Don/Forde Park – A teacher jailed for sexually abusing boys at schools in Wales and Devon has begun an appeal against his conviction. Brian Ely, 71, was sentenced to 15 years at Exeter Crown Court in 2001 for 26 sex offences against boys dating back 40 years.



Albert Frederick Tom Dyson: Never employed by social services. Convicted in 1980 of three counts of indecency against one boy in care at Bryn Estyn. Jailed for 18 months. Owned the 15/20 Club in Rhyl for 20 years before selling it in 1980. Was never employed by social services but befriended a boy at Bryn Estyn.

TRIBUNAL: Admitted he committed three offences of indecency against the unnamed boy while he was in care at the Wrexham home. Convicted in 1980 and sentenced to 18 months in jail.

BRYAN DAVIES:

Warden at Ystrad Hall, Llangollen. Convicted in 1978 of three indecent assaults on two pupils at the school. He got probation for 12 month on condition of hospital treatment. Also given a sentence of 160 hours of community service. He had been a corporal in the Army followed by 23 years as a fitter for an aircraft company. He had no experience of dealing with children in care.

Appointed Deputy Principal of Ystrad Hall School in 1975. The Llangollen school was registered as an institution catering wholly or mainly for handicapped pupils aged 11 to 14 years. Some previous experience with residential care work.

TRIBUNAL: Davies was described by two witnesses as a "nutter". There were 12 complaints against him and six referred to Davies hitting out with a torch. Concluded he did use physical force inappropriately from time to time but most of it was due to inexperience.

Christopher Ian Thomas: He was a deputy child care officer at Bersham Hall for 10 years from 1978, then he was promoted to officer in charge for another decade.

**TRIBUNAL:** Four witnesses alleged physical assaults by Thomas and he admitted that on a number of occasions he did use excessive force. He has never been convicted of offences.

**JACQUELINE ELIZABETH THOMAS:** A full-time residential care worker employed at Chevet Hey children's home, Clwyd. Received a three-month suspended sentence for indecent assault on a boy of 15. She was one of five people grouped together in the report who were convicted of sex offences against children in 1986 at the Chevet Hey home after an investigation which spanned 1981-89. Went to Chevet Hey as a care officer in 1979 when she was 20 years old. She left school when she was 16 with eight O Levels and had 18 months' care experience before going to the Wrexham home

**REGINALD GARETH COOKE (also known as Gary Cooke):** Employed for only two weeks at Bersham Hall in 1972. Later he was taken on as a care worker for more than a year by the Bryn Alyn Community in their children's homes in Cheshire and Higford. He had also been an assistant warden at a probation hostel in Ruabon, near Wrexham, for six months.

**TRIBUNAL:** Heard that Cooke was one of the leaders of a known paedophile ring in Wrexham. In 1980 he pleaded guilty to two serious sexual assaults, one of indecent assault and one of taking an indecent photograph. He was sentenced to five years. In 1987 he was jailed for a further seven years for sex offences on boys aged between 12 and 18. Jailed for five years but released in November, 1981. Also named among the most serious offenders.

**ARTHUR GRAHAM STEPHENS:** Co-defendant in a sex case with paedophile Reginald Cooke in 1980. Pleading guilty to one serious sexual assault and one indecent assault. Jailed

for three years.

**JOSEPH NEFYN DODD:**

Worked as a housemaster at Bryn Estyn between 1974 and 1977. In 1978 he became Officer in charge at Ty'r Felin.

Physically

abused kids at both homes. Children were physically abused at Ty'r Felin local authority home in Gwynedd while Nefyn Dodd was officer-in-charge between 1978 and 1990.

Gwynedd County Council promoted Dodd to a position of control over all the county's community homes. More than 80 former residents made complaints about Dodd. He ran Ty'r Felin like a harsh sergeant-major might run an Army camp and "we are satisfied that Dodd did frequently use excessive force to children in his care". He has never been convicted of offences.

**DAVID JOHN GILLISON:** Worked for Clwyd County Council as a social worker for the physically handicapped at the Rhuddlan area office. He and Jacqueline Thomas were big friends.

**TRIBUNAL:** In 1987 Gillison pleaded guilty to two offences of gross indecency with a male resident at Bersham Hall and was sentenced to three and a quarter years in prison.

**HEATHER PATRICIA LYNN, 48:**

Deputy Officer in charge of Cartrefle from 1980-1990.

Resigned after

admitting a sexual relationship with an under-age boy.

**JOAN GLOVER:** The senior care officer at South Meadow Community Centre from 1969 to the end of 1972. She lived in Staffordshire previously working in the packing department of a Royal Doulton factory and teaching at Sunday school. She

left the Prestatyn home in 1973 to sit a formal care qualification, returning a year later for a further eight year stint at the helm.

TRIBUNAL: Former residents who alleged physical abuse said Glover was a “Jeckyll and Hyde” character. Glover admitted “losing her rag” and the report said the children were subject to Glover’s erratic and oppressive conduct.

Slapped a girl of 13 and spanked other kids with her shoes.

IAN THOMAS MUIR: Head teacher of the Bryn Alyn Community school in the mid 80s.

TRIBUNAL: Could not be traced. In 1986 he was convicted of having unlawful sex with an 15-year-old female resident. He was jailed for six months

PETER STEEN: Worked at Bryn Alyn from 1976-1993 also worked at Gatewen Hall and Bryntirion Hall. Earlier he had been a self-employed building contractor. He ran a five-a-side football team which led to voluntary youth work and a prominent role at Ruabon Leisure Centre. He had no formal training in social work and was a former club bouncer.

TRIBUNAL: Named by 19 complainants who allege he was a physical abuser. The report concludes he did use excessive force to restrain both boys and girls from time to time but one member of staff called him a strong disciplinarian but fair person.

Roger Owen Griffiths and his former wife, Anthea Beatrice Roberts, the proprietors of Gatewen Hall residential school from 1977 to 1982, when the premises were sold to the Bryn Alyn Community, were convicted in the Crown Court at Chester on 3 and 4 August 1999. Griffiths was sentenced to a total of eight years’ imprisonment for offences of buggery (one), attempted buggery (one), indecent assault (one) and



cruelty (four) involving four boy residents at the school. Roberts was sentenced to two years' imprisonment for two offences of indecent assault on two other boy residents aged under 16 years.

David Gwyn Birch: Employed as a child care officer at Bryn Estyn in 1979. Before that he had worked as a youth worker in Holywell and in camps in the USA. A qualified PE teacher, he moved to Chevet Hey when Bryn Estyn closed. TRIBUNAL: In all, 17 former Bryn Estyn residents complained of physical assaults by Birch during the five years he worked there. He was acquitted of two sexual offences alleged against him in 1995.

### **February 2000 – Approved school teachers jailed for abuse**



Two men who abused young boys when they worked in an approved school in Monmouthshire have been jailed for a total of 23 years.

A judge at Newport Crown Court jailed 66-year-old Barrie Alden, the former deputy principal at the Ty Mawr School near Abergavenny for 15 years after being convicted of 10 offences against young boys.

Ex-housemaster John Wright, 56, from Talgarth in Powys was sentenced to eight years after being found guilty of six counts. Alden, from Norwich, and Wright, from Talgarth, Powys, committed the offences on eight boys at the council-run home for vulnerable children from the 1960s to the 1980s. The home

was closed in 1991.

July 2000 – A social worker who abused two boys at an Islington Council children's home in the 1970s was sentenced to four years' imprisonment earlier this week.



December 1997 – A former scoutmaster and youth worker, David Stanley, (pic above) from Telford, has been jailed for 18 years for a series of sexual attacks on young boys in his care. The offences were committed while Stanley worked as a scoutmaster and then as a care assistant at a privately-run residential children's home in Shifnal, Shropshire. The home was part of the same company which owned the Bryn Alyn home in north Wales

Michael Taylor pleaded guilty at London's Snaresbrook crown court to seven counts of indecent assault at Gisburne House. When he left Gisburne House he became deputy superintendent of Bersham Hall children's home in North Wales where he repeatedly assaulted two 11-year-old boys in his care.

Taylor was arrested after the people he abused, now adults, went to the police. He was previously convicted of two indecent assaults in 1980. His name will be added to the sex offenders' register.

Few children complained and staff were strongly discouraged from voicing concerns. The worst "cult of silence" was at Bryn Estyn, where there was suspicion and gossip for

many years about Howarth's "flat list". He compiled a list of boys invited to his flat for the evening, who had to wear pyjamas with no underwear, and were then subjected to all manner of sexual assault. The principal, Matt Arnold, threatened staff with dismissal if they gave currency to the rumours.

There was isolated sexual abuse at two of Paul Hett's private children's homes, Dol Rhyd School and Ysgol Hengwrt. Five men on the staff abused a victim each. Roger Platres Saint, a foster parent, was jailed for 6½ years in 1997 for indecent assaults on nine children. North Wales Police were at fault for telling social services in 1978 there was nothing detrimental about him; he had indecent assault convictions.

Children in some Gwynedd foster homes were sexually and physically abused. Malcolm Scrugham was jailed in 1993 for ten years for raping a foster child. A foster father and his son were convicted in 1993 of physical assaults.

February 2000

Over the 15 years following the Taylor trial in 1975 nine other care workers were convicted and further allegations surfaced. Between 1978 and 1992 there were 20 police inquiries into allegations made by residents at a number of homes in both Clwyd and Gwynedd involving claims of rape, indecent assault and physical assault.

Homes investigated included Cartref Melys, Ty'r Felin, Y Gwyngyll, Hengwrt, Bersham Hall, Pentre Saeson, Tapley Avenue, Ysgol Treborth, Bryn Alyn, Cheviot Hey, Talfryn, Gatewen, and Park House.

Care workers convicted before 1991 included:

- David Taylor (indecent assault at Bryn Tirion);

- Leslie Wilson (indecent assault, gross indecency, Little Action assessment centre);
- Bryn Davies (indecent assault, Llangollen school);
- Ian Muir (unlawful sexual intercourse, Bryn Alyn);
- David Gillison (indecent assault of a 16-year old at Cheviot Hey);
- Jackie Thomas (indecent assault of Cheviot Hey teenager);
- Stephen Norris (indecent assault, Cartrefle);
- Frederick Rutter (rape and indecent assault, Bryn Estyn).

Between 1974 and 1996, there were 12 internal inquiries by Clwyd Council involving children in its care homes and no fewer than seven different management structures for children's services within its social services department.

The following allegations formed the basis of the police investigation that began in 1991. More than one allegation of abuse were made at a series of homes:

- Bersham Hall (41),
- Berwyn Hall (seven),
- Bryn Alyn (96),
- Bryn Estyn (138),
- Bryn Tirion (15),
- Cartref Bontnewydd (four),
- Cartref Melys (two),
- Cartrefle (30),
- Cherry Hill (two),
- Cheviot Hey (34)
- Clwyd Hall (four),
- Dol Rhyd (two),
- Gatewen (36),
- Gwynfa (24),

- Hengwrt (nine),
- Park House (18),
- Pentre Saeson (20),
  
- Queens Park (13),
- Rhiwlas (three),
- South Meadows (13),
- Tanllwyfan (13),
- Ty Newydd (12),
- Ty'r Felin (85),
- Ucheldre (two),
- Upper Downing (12),
- Y Gwyngyll (18),
- Ynys Fechan (four),
- Ysgol Talfryn (19),
- Ystrad Hall (39).

## **Suspicious murders !**

**Another unresolved mystery surrounds a fire in a flat in Brighton which killed five people in April 1992. It broke out in the third-floor flat in Palmeira Avenue, Hove, during a Saturday-night party attended by about 20 people, drawn mostly from the town's gay community.**

**Several former Clwyd children's home residents are thought to have been among the guests: two who have been positively identified had been Bryn Alyn residents and knew John Allen very well – Adrian Johns and his brother Lee (also known as Lee Homberg).**

**Adrian Johns died and Lee Johns (found dead in 1995 after testifying in John Allen's trial) was badly injured in the blaze, which another party guest, Trevor Carrington, a former airline steward, admitted starting as a prank. (He**

**himself committed suicide shortly afterwards.) Rumours continue to circulate about the fire, although at the time a link with the Clwyd scandal was not made.**

**The 'whole truth' for 12 dead**

**The children placed in residential homes in Clwyd, North Wales, in the 1970s and 1980s, were not, for the most part, delinquents, juvenile criminals, or uncontrollable. They were the innocent victims of domestic problems, sometimes four and five years old, who had been abused in their own families, or youngsters who had simply been abandoned.**

**What they needed was love and protection. But the world they went into, as described in the report, was no safe haven. It was a brutal, abusive regime.**

**“The history of allegations of serious abuse of children by staff was frankly appalling in its extent and persistence down the years,” says the report by three leading and independent child care specialists – which has so far not been published.**

**Most damning of all is the list of 12 young men who have died and whose deaths were linked to their lives in care. Most of these deaths were not when the abuse was occurring, the report shows, but took place around the time of the investigation and trials of the men found guilty of abusing children in Clwyd.**

**The list reveals that nine of the 12 died after the police investigation and in some cases after men had been charged. Some of the young men who died had been involved in making statements or giving evidence.**

**The team says: “We are of the opinion that perhaps insufficient thought has been given to the psychological or psychiatric stress of appearing in court as a witness in**

**high-profile cases.”**

**The stark list of those who have died appears on one page of the 300- page report and the inquiry team says that even this list “is not comprehensive’.**

**R1: Fell to his death from a railway bridge. Former resident of Bryn Alyn Home.**

**R2: May, 1978, committed suicide aged 16 by taking an overdose of pain killing tablets. Former resident of Bryn Alyn.**

**R3: March 1985, was found dead in a flat in which he was living in poverty, aged 21. Former resident of Little Acton Assessment centre.**

**R4: April 1992, died in a fire aged 32 in premises in which he lived in Sussex. The inquest verdict – unlawful killing. Former resident of Bryn Alyn.**

**R5: June 1992, found dead aged 18 in a bed-sitter. Cause of death, acute respiratory failure due to solvent abuse. Former resident of Bryn Alyn.**

**R6: January, 1994, committed suicide by hanging, aged 27.**

**R7: April, 1994, died aged 27 from alcohol abuse. Allegations that he had been the subject of a serious sexual offence. Former Bryn Estyn resident.**

**R8: July 1994, found dead in a car, aged 18. Former foster child in Clwyd where he allegedly suffered from maltreatment.**

**R9: November, 1994, committed suicide aged 16 by hanging.**

**R10: February, 1995, died from and apparent heroin overdose aged 37. Former resident of Bryn Alyn where it was alleged he had been sexually abused.**

**R11: February, 1995, hanged himself aged 31. Allegations of sexual abuse against care workers.**

**R12: May, 1995, found hanging aged 27. Allegations that he had been sexually abused by a senior care worker. Former resident of Bryn Estyn.**

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